



UNITED STATES - VIETNAM RELATIONS

1945 - 1967

I

VIETNAM AND THE UNITED STATES

1940 - 1950

1. U.S. Department of State, Documentary History of United States Policy Toward Indochina, 1940-1953 (Historical Office, Research Project No. 354, April, 1954) TS; see also U.S. Congress, House, Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers, 1944 (House Document No. 303, 1955), III, 769-784; Ruth B. Russell, A History of the United Nations Charter (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1950), 173-174.
2. Ibid. Included in the Documentary History..., op. cit., is a Memorandum of Conversation between Roosevelt and Stalin, Teheran, November 28, 1943 (SECRET). The President is said to have then considered that a twenty-to thirty-year period would be necessary before the Indochinese peoples would be ready for independence.
3. Speech of Foreign Minister Pineau, New York Times, March 5, 1956.
4. Russell, op. cit., 79.
5. Ibid., 174, quoting Cordell Hull, Memoirs, II, 1957; U.S. Department of State, Documentary History..., op. cit., A-10.
6. Ernest J. King and Walter M. Whitehill, Fleet Admiral King: A Naval Record (1952), 569; quoted in Russell, op. cit., 574.
7. John Ehrman, Grand Strategy: August 1943-September 1944, Vol. V. (1956), 442; quoted in Russell, op. cit., 574.
8. U.S. Department of State, Documentary History..., op. cit., A-16.
9. Ibid., A-16.
10. Extract from Stettinius Diary; quoted in U.S. State Department Study, Documentary History..., op. cit., A-17.
11. William D. Leahy, I Was There (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1950), 244, 269, 286.
12. Russell, op. cit., 575.
13. In March 1945, the President remarked to Gen. Wedemeyer, then commanding officer for U.S. forces in China, "that he must watch carefully to prevent British and French political activities in the area and that he should give only such support to the British and French as would be required in direct operations against the Japanese." U.S. Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers: The Conference of Berlin (the Potsdam Conference), 1945, I, 917.

14. The de Gaulle representations were made orally to the U.S. Ambassador. See U.S. Department of State, telegram 1196 from Paris, 13 March, and Documentary History..., A-19, A-20.
15. Leahy, I Was There, op. cit., pp. 338-339. On the basis of research into the Air Force archives, Bernard Fall wrote in Street Without Joy (Harrisburg, Pa.: Stackpole, 1967, 4th ed.) note, p. 25, that General Claire Chennault, commander of the 14th Air Force, "...Did indeed fly support missions in behalf of the retreating French forces." After the Japanese take-over in March.⁷ In his The Two Viet-Nams, moreover, Fall cited the memoirs of General Lionel-Max Chassin, commander of the French Far East Air Force, to the effect that the 14th Air Force provided supplies and even fighter support to the French until at least April 26, 1945. (New York: Praeger, 1967, 2nd revised ed.) n. 10, pp. 466-469. In both books, however, Fall presents a strong case for the paucity of U.S. aid to the French in the 1945-1946 period. See also U.S. Department of State, Memorandum of Conversation by Assistant Secretary of State Dunn, 19 March 1945, and telegram to Paris 1576 of 19 April 1945.
16. Russell, op. cit., 975.
17. Russell, op. cit., 91; quoting from Cordell Hull, The Memoirs of Cordell Hull, 2 Vols., (New York: Macmillan Co., 1948).
18. Russell, op. cit., pp. 176-177, 573-589.
19. Ibid., 585, US Dept State, Documentary History..., op. cit., B-2.
20. U.S. Department of State, Documentary History..., op. cit., B-1.
21. U.S. Department of State, Documentary History..., op. cit., B-2, p. 2.
22. Russell, op. cit., p. 1047.
23. U.S. Department of State, Memorandum by the Director of the Office of European Affairs (Matthews) to the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee, May 23, 1945. The proposal for a division of responsibility between Chinese Nationalist and British forces was first made by General Marshall, head of the Combined Chiefs of Staff, on July 18, 1945. After some negotiation with Chiang Kai-shek over the precise dividing line, the British accepted the 16th parallel; Truman and Churchill formally agreed to the arrangement on July 24. See Foreign Relations of the United States (Potsdam), op. cit., I, 83 377, 922; and II, 1313, 1319, 1465.

24. As for the O.S.S., the ranking American official in northern Vietnam in 1945, Brigadier General Philip E. Gallagher, has attested: "...throughout the months before the Japanese capitulation, O.S.S. officers and men operated behind Japanese lines, to arm, lead and train native guerrillas who were organized by the Vietminh." (A situation report, undated, in the Gallagher Papers, quoted in Bert Cooper, John Killigrew, and Norman LaCharite, Case Studies in Insurgency and Revolutionary Warfare: Vietnam 1941-1954 [Washington, D.C.: Special Operations Research Office, The American University, 1967], p. 107.) Other sources conclude, however, that O.S.S. assistance to the Viet Minh-led guerrillas was extremely limited, although it gave the Viet Minh the opportunity to proclaim that they were part of the Allied effort against the Japanese. (See Fall, Le Viet-Minh: La République Démocratique du Viet-Nam [Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1960], p. 34; Cooper, Killigrew, and LaCharite, op. cit.)
25. U.S. Department of State, Documentary History..., op. cit., B-3.
26. U.S. Department of State, telegram from Paris 6857, 28 November 1945.
27. U.S. Department of State, Documentary History..., op. cit., B-4, B-6, B-9.
28. U.S. Department of State, Political Activities Along the South China-Indochina Border (Office of Intelligence Research, Report No. 4575, December 29, 1947), 5.
29. U.S. Department of State, Documentary History..., op. cit., B-5.
30. U.S. Department of State, Political Activities Along the South China-Indochina Border, op. cit., 5.
31. U.S. Department of State, Indochina Since 1939 (Office of Intelligence Research, No. 3602, 25 March 1946), 6.
32. U.S. Department of State, Brief on Issues in Dispute Between France and Vietnam (Office of Intelligence Research, OIR Report No. 4303, March 10, 1947), 6.
33. U.S. Department of State, Indochina Since 1939: A Factual Survey (Office of Intelligence Research, No. 3602, 25 March 1946), Appendix A. Appended to the Accords of 6 March were a series of supplementary agreements, among which was a plan for withdrawing all French troops within five years.
34. Ibid., 7, 11.

35. In a note to the French Ambassador, of 10 April 1946, the Department of State confirmed that: "...the Franco-Chinese agreement completes the reversion of all of Indo-China to French control..." and that the Combined Chiefs of Staff "offer no objection" to the arrangement.
36. U.S. Department of State, Documentary History..., op. cit., B-9, B-6. The Department of State files contain at least 6 communications from Ho in the period September, 1945, to February, 1946, addressed to the U.S. Government in his capacity as "President of the Provisional Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam" or as President and Foreign Minister of the "Provisional Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam": (1) Letter to President Truman, September 29, 1945 (confidential; file 851G.00/10-1845). (2) Letter to the Secretary of State, October 22, 1945 (from Kunming, desp. 38, October 24, 1945, confidential; file 851G.00/10-2445). (3) Letter to Secretary of State, November 1, 1945 (from Chungking, desp. 890, November 26, 1945, unclassified). (4) Letter to President Truman, undated (from Chungking, tel. 1948, November 8, 1945, confidential; file 851G.00/11.845). (5) Letter to President Truman, January 18, 1946 (from Chungking, tel. 281, February 13, 1946, confidential; file 740.00119 PW/2-1346). (6) Letter to President Truman, February 16, 1946 (unclassified file 851G.10/2-2046).
37. Ibid.
38. U.S. Department of State, telegram to Saigon 305, December 5, 1946.
39. Ellen J. Hammer, The Struggle for Indochina, 1940-1955, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1966), p. 155.
40. Ibid., p. 186; Buttinger, op. cit., II, pp. 676-678.
41. Hammer, op. cit., p. 190.
42. Ibid.
43. Ibid., p. 186.
44. Ibid., p. 191.
45. Ibid., p. 192.
46. Ibid., p. 193.
47. Ibid., pp. 193-194.

48. Ibid., p. 195.
49. Ibid., p. 197.
50. Ibid., p. 195.
51. Ibid., p. 195.
52. Ibid., p. 207.
53. Ibid., p. 204.
54. Ibid., p. 199.
55. Ibid., p. 208.
56. Buttinger, op. cit., 806-807.
57. Chart is based on contemporary publications of the U.S. Department of State, Office of Intelligence Research, together with Hammer, op. cit., and Buttinger, op. cit., passim.
58. U.S. Department of State telegram to Paris 6586 of 24 December 1946, CONFIDENTIAL.
59. U.S. Department of State telegram to Paris 75, 8 January 1947.
60. U.S. Department of State memorandum for Mr. Acheson, dated 8 January 1947, subject "French Indochina."
61. Ibid.
62. State Department telegram 431 to Embassy in Paris, 3 February 1947, SECRET.
63. Hammer, op. cit., 202.
64. U.S. Department of State telegram to Paris 1737, 13 May 1947.
65. U.S. Department of State telegram from Paris 3621 of 9 July 1948, and telegram to Paris 2637 of 14 July 1948.
66. U.S. Department of State telegram to Paris 3368, 30 August 1948.
67. U.S. Department of State telegram from Paris 5129, 30 September 1948.
68. U.S. Department of State telegram to Paris 145, 17 January 1949.

69. U.S. Department of State telegram to Saigon 77, 10 May 1949.
70. U.S. Department of State telegram, Marshall 9741 to Nanking, 2 July 1948.
71. U.S. Department of State, Appraisal of Communist Efforts in Southeast Asia: 1948 (Office of Intelligence Research Report No. 4778, October 12, 1948), 12-13.
72. U.S. Department of State Bulletin, Vol. 16 (March 23, 1947), 536.
73. Ibid.
74. Committee of European Economic Cooperation, General Report, Vol. 1 (U.S. Department of State Publication 2930, 1947), 13.
75. Congressional Record, Vol. 94, Part VI, 80th Congress, 2d Session, 7791.
76. Charles Wolf, Jr., Foreign Aid: Theory and Practice in Southern Asia (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960), 40-52.
77. Ibid., 53-54.
78. Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1949, 626.
79. Memorandum for the Executive Secretary, National Security Council, from the Secretary of Defense, dated June 10, 1949, subject: United States Policy toward Asia.
80. A Report to the National Security Council by the Executive Secretary on "The Position of the United States with Respect to Asia" (NSC 48/1, December 23, 1949).
81. A report to the President by the National Security Council on "The Position of the United States with Respect to Asia" (NSC 48/2, December 30, 1949).
82. U.S. Department of State, telegram to Saigon 25, January 20, 1950.
83. U.S. Department of State, Press Release No. 104, February 1, 1950.
84. U.S. Department of State telegram to Saigon 59, February 4, 1950.
85. Background Information Relating to Southeast Asia and Vietnam, Committee on Foreign Relations, March 1966, p. 30.
86. U.S. Department of State, Documentary History..., op. cit., B-48.

1. Joseph Buttinger, Vietnam: A Dragon Embattled (New York: Praeger, 1967, 2 vols.), I, 172-174.
2. Ibid.
3. Data on Vietnamese political parties is drawn principally from U.S. Department of State, Political Alignments of Vietnamese Nationalists (Office of Intelligence Research, Report No. 3708, October 1, 1949), passim.
4. Ibid., 138 ff.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., 31-32.
7. Ibid., 36
8. Ibid., 138 ff.
9. Bernard B. Fall, ed., Ho Chi Minh on Revolution (New York: Praeger, 1967), 130-131.
10. The Hitler-Stalin Pact was signed in August, 1939. On 26 September 1939, France outlawed the Communist Party. Ibid., and Buttinger, op. cit., I, 224-226.
11. Ibid., 236-250.
12. Ibid., 242-244.
13. U.S. Dept of State, Political Alignments..., op. cit., 58.
14. Fall, ed., Ho Chi Minh on Revolution, op. cit., 133-134
15. George Modelski, "The Viet Minh Complex," in Cyril E. Black and Thomas P. Thornton, eds., Communism and Revolution (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), 189-190. Cf. Bernard B. Fall, The Two Viet-Nams (New York: Praeger, 2nd Edition, 1963), 62.
16. Vo Nguyen Giap, People's War, People's Army (Hanoi, 1961), 75, quoted in ibid.
17. U.S. Dept of State, Political Alignments..., op. cit., 60.
18. Fall, The Two Viet-Nams, op. cit., 62-63.

19. U.S. Dept of State, Political Alignments..., op. cit., 54-55.
20. Ibid.
21. I. Milton Sacks, "Marxism in Vietnam," in Frank N. Trager, ed., Marxism in Southeast Asia (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1959), 150.
22. Modelska, loc. cit., paraphrasing the official Vietnamese Communist Party history, Thirty Years of Struggle of the Party.
23. Bert Cooper, John Killigrew, Norman La Charité, Case Studies in Insurgency and Revolutionary Warfare: Vietnam 1941-1954 (Washington: Special Operations Research Office, The American University, 1964), 87-88.
24. Modelska, op. cit., 189, quoting Thirty Years...
25. Cooper, et al, op. cit., 88-89. French sources estimated 50,000 Viet Minh in Tonkin as of August, 1944; U.S. Dept of State, Political Alignments..., op. cit., 61.
26. Cooper, et al, loc. cit.
27. Some French authors have been prone to credit the U.S. for Ho Chi Minh and the Viet Minh; e.g., Lucien Bodard, The Quicksand War (Boston: Little, Brown, 1967), 221-222. The ranking American official in northern Vietnam in 1945, Brigadier General Philip E. Gallagher, has attested: "...throughout the months before the Japanese capitulation, O.S.S. officers and men operated behind Japanese lines, to arm, lead and train native guerrillas who were organized by the Viet Minh." (A situation report, undated, in the Gallagher Papers, quoted in Bert Cooper, John Killigrew, and Norman La Charité, Case Studies in Insurgency and Revolutionary Warfare: Vietnam 1941-1954 (Washington, D. C.: Special Operations Research Office, The American University, 1964), 107.) But O.S.S. assistance to the Viet Minh-led guerrillas was quite limited; although it gave the Viet Minh the opportunity to proclaim that they were part of the Allied effort against the Japanese. Cf., Fall, Le Viet-Minh: La République Démocratique du Viet-Nam (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1960), 34. Fall, Two Viet-Nams, op. cit., 66-71, details the case for the postwar American aid and comfort to the Viet Minh, which adds up to a more substantial charge -- but similarly is without foundation in the record.
28. Quoted in ibid., 63.
29. U.S. Dept of State, Political Alignments..., op. cit., 66-67, quoting The Factual Record of the August Revolution (Hanoi, September, 1946).
30. Fall, ed., Ho Chi Minh on Revolution, op. cit., 141-142.
31. Buttinger, op. cit., I, 435-436.

32. U.S. Dept. of State, Political Alignments..., op. cit., 146-147.
33. Hammer, op. cit., 104.
34. Marvin E. Gettleman, ed., Viet Nam (New York: Fawcett, 1965), 57-59.
35. Buttinger, op. cit., I, 325-327.
36. Ibid., 328-331; Hammer, op. cit., 115-116.
37. Hammer, op. cit., 117, quoting Supreme Allied Command, Southeast Asia, Commission No. 1, Saigon, Political History of French Indochina South of 16°, 13 September - 11 October 1945.
38. U.S. Dept of State, Political Alignments..., op. cit., 73-74.
39. Hammer, op. cit., 117
40. Hammer, op. cit., 120.
41. Buttinger, op. cit., I, 337
42. Buttinger, op. cit., 351-354.
43. Ibid.
44. Buttinger, op. cit., 356, 634.
45. Ibid; Sacks, op. cit., 157; Fall, ed., Ho on Revolution, op. cit., 146.
46. Sacks, op. cit., 158.
47. Ibid.
48. U.S. Dept of State, Political Alignments..., 77-78.
49. Hammer, op. cit., 150.
50. Buttinger, op. cit., 371-372.
51. Ibid., 399-401; U.S. Dept of State, Political Alignments..., op. cit., 78; George A. Carver, Jr., "The Faceless Viet Cong," Foreign Affairs (Vol. 44, No. 3, April, 1966), 350.
52. Buttinger, op. cit., I, 402-403.
53. U.S. Dept of State, Political Alignments..., op. cit., 81-82.
54. Fall, Two Viet-Nams, op. cit., 131.
55. Hammer, op. cit., 179.

56. Pham Van Dong (presently Premier, then Vice President) announced in 1950 that promulgation of the 1946 Constitution had been postponed "because several of its provisions require for their application the cessation of the state of war," and in 1951, after Ho had openly aligned with the Sino-Soviet powers, the Viet Minh radio explained that "a gang of traitors" had been evolved in its formulation, and hence a "progressive character was lacking." During the "Rectification of Errors," in late 1956, after the peasant uprisings of that year, the DRV set up a constitutional reform committee. In December, 1958, Ho invited the public to submit recommendations on a new draft basic law, and the second Constitution was promulgated in 1960.

Ibid., 178-181; U.S. Dept of the Army, Pamphlet 550-40, U.S. Army Area Handbook for Vietnam (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1962), 235.

57. Gentlemen, ed., op. cit., 88-89.
58. American Consulate General, Saigon, Despatch 34, February 12, 1949.
59. Op. cit., 90-91.
60. Vo Nguyen Giap, People's War, People's Army (Hanoi: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1961), 35, also 67-108; Cf., "Let Us Step Up The Theory-Formulating Task of The Party," Hoc Tap (No. 9, September 1956), in Joint Publications Research Service, "Translations from Hoc Tap" (No. 38,660, November 16, 1966), 2.
61. Ibid.
62. Fall, Ho on Revolution, op. cit., 206 ff.

1. Bernard B. Fall, "Ho Chi Minh: Like It Or Not," Esquire; November, 1957, p. 121.
2. Hoang Van Chi, From Colonialism to Communism, Frederick A. Praeger (New York: 1965), pp. 37-38.
3. Ellen J. Hammer, The Struggle for Indochina 1940-1954, Stanford University Press, Stanford, Calif., 1965, p. 76.
4. Bernard B. Fall, Ho Chi Minh: On Revolution, Frederick A. Praeger, New York: 1967, p. 27. This is a collection of selected writings by Ho Chi Minh, 1920-1966. Hereafter reference will be made to this volume as Ho Chi Minh on Revolution.
5. Hammer, op. cit., p. 76.
6. Hoang Van Chi, op. cit., p. 40.
7. Ibid., p. 42.
8. Ibid., p. 19-19.
9. U.S. Dept of State, Political Alignments of Vietnamese Nationalists, (OIR Report No. 3708, 1949), p. 30.
10. Ibid., p. 32.
11. Ibid., p. 34
12. Fall, op. cit., p. 204.
13. Ibid., p. 205.
14. Fall, ed., Ho On Revolution, p. 137.
15. Hammer, op. cit., pp. 98-105; Fall, Two Viet-Nams (New York: Praeger, 1964), pp. 83-103; Buttinger, Vietnam: A Dragon Embattled (New York: Praeger, 1967), I, pp. 292-300, 344-351.
16. Fall, ed., Ho On Revolution, p. 141; CIA, Biographic Handbook, CIA/CR BH 6.6, entry for Ho dated 21 January 1965.
17. Ibid.; George A. Carver, Jr., "The Faceless Viet Cong," Foreign Affairs (Vol 44, No. 3, April, 1966), pp. 349-351.
18. Fall, ed., Ho On Revolution, 150 ff. (by dates).

19. Fall, Two Viet-Nams, pp. 101-103; Buttinger, op. cit., I, pp. 266-269; Central Intelligence Agency, "Probable Developments in North Vietnam to July 1956," (NIE 63.1-55, 19 July 1955), p. 4..
20. Ibid.; Robert Shaplen, The Lost Revolution (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), XIV.
21. Ibid., p. 52; Shaplen also quotes Ho as saying in 1946 "To achieve a communist society, big industrial and agricultural production is necessary...I do not know when that will be realized in Vietnam where production is low. We are not yet in a position to meet the conditions." Ibid., pp. 48-49. Buttinger, op. cit., I, pp. 266-269, 637 Cf., Fall, Two Viet-Nams, op. cit., p. 101.
22. Shaplen, op. cit., p. 48; Hammer, op. cit., p. 173.
23. Shaplen, op. cit., p. 53.
24. E. g., Isaacs in Gettleman, ed., op. cit.; Fall, Two Viet-Nams, op. cit., pp. 81-82; Shaplen, pp. 28-35, 42-44, 47; CIA, Biographic Handbook, op. cit.
25. U.S. Dept of State telegram from Paris, 6131, to Acheson, September 11, 1945.
26. U.S. Dept of State telegram to Saigon, Acheson 305, December 5, 1945.
27. U.S. Dept of State telegram, Marshall 431 to Paris, February 3, 1947.
28. U.S. Dept of State telegram to Hanoi 36, May 20, 1949.
29. Fall, ed., Ho on Revolution, p. 198
30. Ibid., pp. 199-200
31. Carver, op. cit., p. 352; CIA, Biographic Handbook, op. cit.
32. U.S. Dept of State, Far Eastern Notes (No. 8, May 7, 1954), p. 6; Shaplen, op. cit., p. 52.
33. Intelligence Files, OSD, Buttinger, op. cit., II, p. 699.
34. Gettleman, ed., op. cit., p. 55.
35. Ibid., p. 75; Hammer, op. cit., p. 202.
36. Buttinger, op. cit., p. 363; Hammer, op. cit., pp. 201-202.
37. Gettleman, op. cit., p. 55.
38. Shaplen, op. cit., p. 53; Hammer, op. cit., p. 250.

39. Shaplen, op. cit., p. 52.
40. Hammer, op. cit., pp. 249-250.
41. Ibid.
42. Department of State Bulletin (February 13, 1950), p. 244.
43. Hammer, op. cit., p. 251.